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hineinträgt und dabei häufig schon das Was erkennt. Er ist kein Wert und Unwert abwägender Aesthetiker von sicherem Urteil. So hätten - im Angesicht seines chronisch gewordenen Fiaskos; vgl. den öden Abklatsch von Grillparzers *Jüdin in Kaiser Karls Geisel* - die Artikel über Hauptmann, wenn sie schon ein zweitesmal abgedruckt werden mussten, von Grund aus umgearbeitet werden sollen. Von der räumlichen Freigebigkeit gegen Sudermann ganz zu schweigen: welcher Wissende nimmt Sudermann heute noch ernst? So ist es auch keineswegs ausgemacht, dass Klingers Beethoven den hohen Platz in der deutschen Kunst innehat, den ihm Francke zuweist. Um eine Skulptur, die Kommentare braucht, ist es eine missliche Sache. Vielleicht stehn der Nachwelt Hildebrands Bismarck oder Klingers eigener Liszt als Kunstwerke sehr viel höher.

Doch genug des Nörgelns bei einem Buch, dessen schlechteste Eigenschaft es nicht ist, dass es zum Nachdenken, Fragen und Widersprechen herausfordert.

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O. E. LESSING.

Hebbels Stellung zu Shakespeare von Dr. Wilhelm Alberts. Forschungen zur neueren Literaturgeschichte, herausgegeben von Dr. Franz Muncker. XXXIII. Berlin, 1908. Preis M. 2.

This treatise, intended primarily as a contribution to the history of the German drama, will be welcomed, especially by those readers who are interested in the development of the tragic since Shakespeare's time. The Shakespearean tragedy is a character tragedy pure and simple. Splendid and puissant personalities are its primary material. The tragic is based on human weakness and human passion as they influence the will of the individual for evil or good. It is a tragedy of moral failings and intellectual blunders.

Hebbel's drama deals no less with the character, though more with the evolutionary epoch of which the characters are

exponents. The tragic in Hebbel is a stern necessity resulting from the combination of inner and outer circumstances. These are the words of the author: "Er (Hebbel) lässt die Notwendigkeit... aus einer Zwangslage, aus menschlichen Leidenschaften oder bestimmten Lebensanschauungen hervorgehen. Und je nachdem das eine in einem Drama besonders deutlich geschieht - denn niemals wird es völlig von dem anderen getrennt sein - , kann man von einem Konflikt der Zwangslage, der Leidenschaft oder der Lebensanschauung sprechen."

This statement is striking to the student of Hebbel. It seems like an old truth in a new dialect and it certainly has its advantages. It emphasizes the rapid dissemination of evolutionary ideas in the first half of the nineteenth century and the great influence these were exerting in this particular field of art. In Hebbel's drama environment assumes a shaping destiny on human life such as it never played in Shakespeare's drama. And dwelling upon this phase to the exclusion of all else the author is justified in his use of the terms as quoted above.

But strange to say Hebbel never speaks of his dramas nor expresses his conception of the tragic in this way. Says he ¹: "Tragic guilt is to be sought in the want of moderation... It is a primordial condition and a constant factor of life, of which man is scarcely conscious, - an element of human existence itself." Hebbel bases the tragic on the *idiosyncrasy of the individual*². The reader who does not tacitly acknowledge this will find no place for Hebbel's books upon his shelves.

We think that Mr. Alberts would have done better by giving this conception the importance it deserves in his treatise, rather than discussing it in a preliminary chapter. What does it mean to say: "Konflikte sind auf eine bestimmte *Denkart* zurückgeführt, die durch ihren Druck das Unheil bewirkt"?—Grillparzer uses a term that bears the particular stamp of his personality. "Feeling is the expression of the particular existence of the individual; the individual disposition eternally perishes and

¹) W. XI, p. 29.

²) See Chap. II. Schillers Einfluss auf die Jugenddramen Hebbels von E. O. Eckelmann. Heidelberg 1906.

is born anew'" etc. Grillparzer would have said, conflict arises from diverse modes of *feeling* rather than of thought. In each is meant the tangible evidence of individuality.

And what is a conflict in the form of a dilemma, (ein Konflikt der Zwangslage)? Why is *Judith* so unique and why isn't Schiller's *Maid of Orleans* of this type? For it is the mission of both heroines to rid their country of a dreaded foe. Both falter in their trust and by the selfsame passion.—The situations are the same, but not the conceptions of the characters. In reality, a conflict in the form of a dilemma is a falsism, unless the conception holds that the individual is in its very essence constrained and confined within the pale of human limitations.

It was this truth that Hebbel impressed upon his readers when he chose his heroine a naive, impressionable Jewess, struggling with her love, impelled onward by her duty. Negate the necessity of her passion and the essence of her being is negated. Schiller's heroine is a perfected type of the normal. Because she faltered when she should have been steadfast, she was guilty of a grievous wrong and suffered just punishment. There was but one course open for her; there was no vexatious alternative.

Worthy of commendation is the wealth of observations Mr. Alberts presents. There are nice distinctions of dramatic economy, style, characterization, the utility of evil in plot and counterplot—contrasts to be ascribed to purely personal traits in the artists and to changes of time. A brief summary must suffice, when the original is so easily accessible and in such attractive form.

Shakespeare unfolds the elementary forces of the will before our eyes in all their spontaneity, grandeur and awe-inspiring rigor. Man surrenders himself to his nature; thinks, feels and acts with inner acclamation. Hebbel's characters are never deserted by their reason; but contrary to its dictates they are lured onward into the depths of passion as if by an irresistible magnetic charm. The sensitiveness of their moral natures re-

¹⁾ G. W. XV. p. 82.

strains them from revealing their inmost self openly. They think, feel and act under restraint.

Hebbel created but few characters that are openly wicked and depraved. With his outlook upon life he had little sympathy for them. Ambrosio and Margareta are of this type,—devils incarnate who delight in evil and vie with the worst evil-doers of Shakespeare.

Holofernes and Leonhard are distinctly non-Shakespearean, however. Unlike Richard III. Nebuchadnezzar's captain is a law unto himself utterly without conscience or any sense of responsibility. The cashier Leonhard lacks all consciousness of the vitiated state of his moral nature. He is a type of naive depravity. With such few exceptions Hebbel anxiously avoids the villain in his tragedy. His dramatic conflicts are those of necessary evil. In general the moral consciousness of his characters is extremely sensitive. (Uechtritz proclaimed Hebbel the "eulogy of woman".) To the ordinary mind, perhaps, they are overscrupulous. This is due to the fact that characters like Hebbel's Rhodope and Mariamne feel themselves the exponent or high priest of certain moral ideas, which once violated destroy the sanctuary irremediably. Not so with Shakespeare's women. Hermione, Isabella, Desdemona suffer the deepest humiliation of heart and yet they are steadfast always and capable of forgiveness.

Apart from the sheer power of Shakespeare's characters nothing has attracted greater attention than the apparent impersonality and the impressive impartiality with which he presents utterly unlike types. He is master of the naive. Nothing can disturb the beautiful harmony of soul depicted in Shakespeare's women. Hebbel attempts the naive for certain dramatic effects, but less successfully. The soul after its rude awakening from the dream of life, torn by conflicting emotions, defiant in the presence of death—this is his forte. Genoveva has the greatest similarity to Desdemona and Isabella. But what a contrast to *Rhodope* and *Kriemhild*!

One of the most interesting observations that Mr. Alberts makes is on the manner in which the means of representation

give color to the object represented. Shakespeare's style unites poetic rhetoric wealth and splendor of imagery with drastic soul portraiture, while Hebbel's characters are depicted by means of elements gained by psychological analysis and become analytically introspective. They bear Hebbel's stamp by the consciousness of their dependence upon the forces that shape their destiny. Mr. Alberts points out that subjectivity in the wider sense of the word is characteristic of none other than Shakespeare himself.

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARD ENGLISH SPEECH.

By J. M. Hart. Henry Holt & Co., New York, 1907.

The purpose of this little book is to outline the history of English pronunciation. There is no attempt to deal with the growth of the standard vocabulary, with accidence, or with syntax, although the title suggests a work of much broader scope. Yet no one will quarrel with the author's limitation of his subject. Many available books treat in sufficiently clear and succinct manner of these other phases of the history of our language, or of the two first at least; but there is greater need of a clear presentation for beginners of the essential facts in the development of English sounds. Most of the current histories of the language, as Lounsbury's, Toller's, Bradley's, etc., do little more than touch now and then on the oral side of the language. One might work through some of them and hardly be conscious that English is a spoken language at all. The exception is Professor Emerson's *History of the English Language*; but here the discussion of sound changes is merely incidental, and the chapters concerned have hardly been revised since the book was first published, in 1891. Nevertheless the